

June 2015

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The 1820 Col. Benjamin Stephenson House



The Volunteer

Digging History Summer Camp

Learn about the life of an archaeologist and participate in an archaeological dig this summer at the 1820 Colonel Benjamin Stephenson House, located in Edwardsville, Illinois. “*Digging History*”, June 17-19, is an archaeology themed summer camp open to area girls and boys in grades 3rd through 5th. Participants will dig in the dirt, discover historical objects and learn what an archaeologist really does at an excavation site.

A temporary ‘dig’ has been



built at the historic home to give summer campers the opportunity to learn how to excavate using grid units and stratigraphic levels; just like professional archaeologists. Artifacts found will be measured, recorded, cleaned, analyzed and accessioned. A final ‘dig’ project and presentation completes

the camp on Friday.

The camp is scheduled for June 17 – 19 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. **Registration deadline is June 13.** Registration is required and includes supplies and snacks. The price per child is \$85. Payment is due at time of registration to insure placement in the camp. Space is limited to 12 participants. Participants need to bring a sack lunch each day. Please call Stephenson House (692-1818) if you have questions or need further information.

Getting Ready for Camp!

Volunteers are needed June 14 at 11 a.m. to help get ready for the ‘*Digging History*’ Summer Camp. We will be prepping the pits as well as doing miscellaneous set-up. A lot of prep work goes in to the camp and we need lots of workers. If you can help, please let the director know by email (stephensonhouse@sbcglobal.net) or give her a call at 618-692-1818.



The Basic Anatomy of Work Garments in the Federal Period: Women



Garments worn for work were made for comfort and durability. A female doing physical labor such as working in the fields, laundry, cooking in the kitchen, and gardening would have worn garments that allowed for ease of movement. One combination of clothing worn by working women was a shift, corset, shortgown, petticoat, apron, day caps, and neckerchiefs or modesty cloths.

Shift:

- Loose fitting garment worn next to the skin as underwear.
- Short sleeves.
- This item was washed more frequently than outer garments.
- Made of lightweight linen or muslin for summer and heavier linen, and flannel (*which is light weight wool, not our modern flannel*) or linsey woolsey for winter wear.
- Drawcord at neckline.
- Length ranged from knee to mid-shin.

WHAT NOT TO DO – Women, regardless of social status, would not

have worn this garment without something over it such as a shortgown or dress. This was considered an undergarment and no respectable woman wore it exposed.

- No ruffles by this period. Avoid pre-made shifts that have large ruffles at the neck that ‘swallows’ the throat and ruffles at the sleeve ends. A shift with short sleeves will be more comfortable under a shortgown or dress and is more appropriate than the shifts sold by most historical clothing companies.
- The Woman’s Shift, 1790-1820 pattern from Kannik’s Korner is the historically recommended shift.

Corset:

- Essential to the fit of the outer garments and maintaining a Federal Period silhouette.
- Fitted to individual wearer. *This item cannot be purchased ready made.*
- Lightly boned half-corset, fully boned half-corset, or full length corset with boning or cording for support.
- Full length corset has a wooden busk down the center front.
- Half-corsets usually laced up the front. Full length corsets laced up the back.
- Traditionally made of nankeen (a canvas-like fabric).
- White or off-white during the Federal Period.
- Provided back support while maintaining the high-waisted silhouette.
- Type of corset worn depends on body type and what is comfortable.

WHAT NOT TO DO – If you are going to have a corset made, make sure the pattern is for 1800-1820. **This is very important to remember!** Victorian or Rev War corsets will not give the proper silhouette. Corsets were made for each individual body and garment being

worn; they are not universal to all periods. It must be fitted to you!

Shortgown:

- Made of linen, light weight wool or printed cotton.
- Loose fitting.
- Cut on the fold as one piece. Lower peplum and lower sleeve were often pieced.
- No inset sleeves.
- High waisted with or without a drawcord.
- Length ranged from a few inches below bust line to mid thigh.
- Pinned closed at neckline.

WHAT NOT TO DO – Shortgowns with inset sleeves are not appropriate for the Federal Period. This style tends to be more 1760s. Also, no French or English bodices! These garments are **not** historical but unfortunately remain popular among many reenactors.

Petticoat:

- Made of linen or light weight wool.
- Fitted waistband with ties at back to close garment.

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- High waisted with sewn suspenders to keep it under the bust line.
- Length ranged from mid-shin to ankle bone.
- Petticoats, as a rule, did not have pockets built-in. Some petticoats had slits in the sides with a pocket worn on a cord around the waist underneath the garment.

Apron:

- Usually made of checked fabrics (small checks) or white.
- Full bodied, bib-front or simple waist tied.
- Made of linen, muslin or wool.
- Tied at back with small cording.
- Protected petticoat and shortgown from soiling.
- Useful in hauling wood, picking up hot pots, wiping a child's face, cleaning off a table, etc.

Day Caps:

- Head covering worn by women of all social stations.
- Ranged from very simple construction to very ornate.
- Made of fine linen such as 'lawn' or handkerchief, batiste or fine muslin.
- An alternative for a working interpretation would be a simple kerchief or turban.
- Kept hair clean when working in dusty or dirty areas.
- Older ladies tended to wear day caps regularly.
- Covers modern hair styles and bad hair days
- Fashionable accessory as well as a practical garment.

WHAT NOT TO DO – the stereotypical 'mob' cap. This is a cap cut in a large circle with a drawstring at the crown. **WRONG, WRONG, WRONG!** This is not a period cap under any circumstances.

Neckerchief or Modesty Cloth:

- Large triangle shaped cloth used to fill in the neckline.
- Colors: white, checked, or printed.
- Lightweight cotton, muslin, or linen.
- Worn on inside of shortgown or outside over shoulders.

With this working clothing anatomy guide, you can make sure your persona has an authentic Federal period look.



June 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 <i>Route 66, 5-8pm</i>	13 <i>Route 66, 12-8pm</i>
14 <i>Camp Prep, 11am Sewing Circle, 1pm</i>	15	16	17 <i>Digging History Summer Camp, 9am-2pm</i>	18	19	20 <i>Garden Tour, 9am-3pm</i>
21	22	23 <i>Board Mtg, 7pm</i>	24	25	26	27
28 <i>Sewing Circle, 1pm</i>	29	30				

Upcoming Dates

- June 12, **Route 66 Celebration**, 5-8 pm.
Volunteers are needed to work our table in the history tent. Contact the director regarding open shifts.
- June 13, **Route 66 Celebration**, 12-8pm.
Volunteers are needed to work our table in the history tent. Contact the director regarding open shifts.
- June 14, **Camp Prep Day**, 11am. *Volunteers will be preparing the pits for the upcoming summer camp.*
- June 14, **Sewing Circle**, 1pm
- June 17-19, **Digging History Summer Camp**, 9am-2pm
- June 20, **Garden Tour**, 9am-3pm
- June 23, **Board of Directors meeting**, 7pm
- June 28, **Sewing Circle**, 1pm



New to the House Wardrobe



Items added to our wardrobe this month include a dress, checked neckerchief and shift. The neckerchief was a communal effort sewn by Lisa Shashek, Julie Mangoff and RoxAnn Raisner. Our new shift was sewn by Diane Schrader. Diane even marked the shift with 'LS 1820'. RoxAnn Raisner made the dress. Since our small clothing supply is worn almost daily by our volunteers, new items are always needed and appreciated. If you'd like to contribute to the wardrobe contact the director of items in demand.



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News & Needs

Thank you....

- Dottie Vaughn for the yards and yards of fabric, sewing brick, thread and reference books to the house library.

Needs....

- Archaeology camp helpers
- Route 66 Celebra-

tion helpers

- Snacks for upcoming summer camps
- flour
- unprocessed honey
- volunteers to help with house tours, gift shop, garden & grounds, grant writing & research, as well as special events.

- cleaning supplies such as Windex, toilet bowl cleaner, hand soap, disinfecting wipes, bleach, and toilet paper
- seamstresses to sew clothing for the volunteer wardrobe
- bolt of 100% cotton batiste

